

February 7, 2018

DRCA Member Meeting

- I. Welcome (Bill Richardson)
 - a. Military Road Safety Project – Hoped to have staff tonight to talk about project and get DRCA input but unable to schedule. Gabriella Vega says doing traffic counts and topographic surveys. Also hiring a consultant to conduct a feasibility study to determine possible roundabout at Military Road and Nellie Custis. Analysis will be done by spring or summer and then County staff will get back to us and will also be seeking community input/comment at that time.
- II. Minutes of October 11 DRCA Meeting – Liz will circulate to group at next meeting.
- III. Reports from Secretary and Treasurer – N/A
- IV. Reports from Board Members
 - a. Anne Wilson – Nothing to report.
 - b. Mike Green – if have neighbors who you see with windshield wipers on but headlights off, will get a ticket. Important to tell them should do it to avoid ticket.
 - c. Charles Henkin – Reagan National Airplane Noise - in mid to late January, had meeting with Libbey Garvey, John Vihstadt and other interested civic associations. There has been a very ineffectual noise group in place for many years; chair of that group has been unwilling to have measurements from existing instruments. Beyer proposing legislation to encourage homeowners to replace windows with windows that muffle sound (better for airplane noise and for environment).
 - d. John Seggerman – Nothing to report
- V. Jill Barker – Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE) – see presentation for more details
 - a. Lived in Arlington for over 22 years; attorney working on energy issues; role with ACE is voluntary
 - b. ACE has been around for 40 years; gets some funding from County
 - c. Suggestions for living a more sustainable lifestyle:
 - i. Don't use single water bottles
 - ii. Remove English ivy from trees
 - iii. Maintain thermostat at 68 degrees in winter and 78 degrees in summer
 - iv. Keep rainwater on your property through rain barrels, rain gardens and green roofs
 - v. Get outside and connected to nature
 - d. Upcoming service projects
 - i. April 14, 2018 – Potomac Watershed clean up
 - e. Energy Masters – Training in energy efficiency techniques for the home; reducing energy bills for residents in affordable housing apartments

- i. They are willing to come to your house and clean your refrigerator coils. They also offer LED bulbs to residents.
- f. Tree Canopy Fund – if get application in on time, can get a free tree.
- g. StormwaterWise Program – Provides property owners with funding for projects that will reduce stormwater runoff from their property.
- h. Northern Virginia Rain Barrel Program – build your own workshop (\$55) or purchase pre-made barrel (\$65).
- i. Arlington Solar Co-Op – 2018 coop will likely launch in spring.
- j. Home energy rebates – rebate of up to \$575 on insulation or air sealing to a home, hot water heaters, HVAC/furnace. Also on AIRE (Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy)
- k. ACE supports (1) The 4 R Actions Group (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rot) and (2) Natural Resources Action Group
- l. Salt use for road treatment is excessive – but not something that ACE is actively involved in.
- m. Upcoming events
 - i. 3/14 – annual meeting
 - ii. 4/25 fundraiser at Sushi Zen
 - iii. 6/22 – summer solstice party at Potomac Overlook
 - iv. October – 40th anniversary gala

VI. Katie Cristol (Chair, Arlington County Board)

- a. Been on the board for 2.5 years
- b. Put her consultant business on hold during her yearlong chairmanship
- c. All hands on deck right now with regard to metro funding
- d. At beginning of January – the Board came up with priorities for the year
- e. She goes back to history of Arlington for guidance to inform thinking about future; recalls middle class values of this area (worries about how to keep that identity going forward).
- f. One of her priorities is affordable/high quality childcare – looking at zoning and regulatory barriers that obstruct this goal. Eager to have Board-adopted policies by the end of the year. Arlington has a set of local standards for childcare facilities and state has separate standards – does it make sense to double up on regulations? Hopes to make changes to Chapter 52 of Arlington County code.
- g. Lack of affordable housing is also a concern – need to think about types of housing inventory. There is the “missing middle” – housing between apartments and single family homes (e.g., duplexes and cottages).
- h. Expects that in 2018 will see new bus stations that save buses time and also roll out of new lines. Goal on the Pike is to have buses run continuously and not have users have to schedule to use buses. Ridership on buses on the Pike is high (highest in the Commonwealth).
- i. Gov. Terry McAuliffe put a funding solution for metro on the table. Not as much investment from state as she would have liked to see. Investment in metrorail could cause \$600M increase in economic activity. Thinking about raising transient occupancy tax (hotels) and grantors tax (for real estate sales). Believes that Fed has to step up –

huge percentage of federal workforce is transported on metro. Two bills introduced in Congress (Comstock and Connelly).

- j. Last year, the Board adopted a Phase I housing conservation district – related to market rates housing units. Some units still are affordable without government intervention (e.g., Westover garden apartments). Lots of pressure to tear down apartments and replace with townhouses. Board changed the by right option – owners still have option to propose development but County will ask owner to come before them and discuss development plans. Owners now need to participate in a site plan process. There was some developer pushback.
- k. Discussion with members
 - i. With regard to speeding Military Road/Nellie Custis, someone suggested speed cameras to slow traffic (Katie Cristol comments that the County has no authority for that)
 - ii. Taxation – if target less than 1% tax rate, bond counsel says too tight to generate enough close-out dollars. Close-out money is one-off; tend to put it toward one-time expenses (e.g., paying engineering studies for property across from Washington Lee HS). This year, will have to make some tough cuts. Even at a time when schools need more money.
 - iii. High school seats – concern that Washington-Lee will become too big. Per Katie Cristol, just launched an analysis of the Career Center. Is a review of a phased development approach. Big crunch will be 2021-22. Renovation of Ed Center – trying to be sensitive that the renovation doesn't just crowd W-L.
 - iv. New Construction/Development – Member expresses concern about trees being torn down with development. Arlington cannot enact laws without specific authority from the Commonwealth. Homebuilder lobby is very influential in Richmond. Patrick Hope just introduced legislation that was purely carrot, not stick, and it was defeated in committee. Arlington can restrict tree removal in the context of stormwater management (under Chesapeake ordinance). You can get designation on your own property for tree protection. Don't have the same policy tools in the inter-governmental context.
 - v. Arlington Municipal Wi-Fi: Member expresses concern about rising costs of internet. Internet only is almost as expensive as bundle which includes cable. Arlington County is restricted from being an internet service provider (ISP); legally restricted from acting as an ISP.

VII. Unfinished Business – N/A

VIII. New Business

- a. Suggestions from members about what DRCA can be doing:
 - i. Airplane noise is a serious problem – if communities aren't aggressive about it, the issue won't be resolved. More than mild annoyance. Need responsible proposals.
 - ii. Woman who has lived here for 7 years and never been to a meeting – would like to be involved in decision-making that goes into intersection design (County contact for community engagement in attendance and introduced herself – Allie

Henry (says she will bring back to staff the expressed interest for community input into consultant's proposal)). Several members express support for community input being solicited upfront/before consultants perform their analysis and issue their report.